

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 VO-03 SCA-01 ORM-02 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
PRS-01 /041 W

-----180616Z 127930 /14

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FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3957

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, PFOR, IS, TW, US

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ABOARD ISRAELI-OWNED VESSEL

REF: (A) STATE 141452, (B) TAIPEI 3188, (C) HONG KONG 7020

1. FOREIGN MINISTER SHEN RECEIVED ME ON SHORT NOTICE THIS MORNING AND I RENEWED IN STRONG TERMS REQUEST PREVIOUSLY MADE TO PERMIT LANDING IN TAIWAN OF REFUGEES ABOARD ISRAELI VESSEL (STATE 141452). IN SO DOING I EMPHASIZED WHITE HOUSE INTENT AND HUMANITARIAN CONCERN AND, WITHOUT MAKING COMMITMENT AS TO TIME OR TOTAL NUMBERS, ASSURED ROC WE WOULD EXAMINE REFUGEES FOR ELIGIBILITY SYMPATHETICALLY AND AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE. I TOLD HIM IN FACT WE WERE SENDING TEAM TO VESSEL MONDAY MORNING TO BEGIN PROCESS.

2. MINISTER SHEN TOLD ME THAT MOFA HAD CONSIDERED THIS REFUGEE CASE VERY THOROUGHLY WITH OTHER GROC OFFICES AND AGENCIES INVOLVED AND HAD CONCLUDED THEY COULD NOT AGREE TO LAND THESE REFUGEES BECAUSE OF THE OPEN-ENDED COMMITMENT IT WOULD REPRESENT. HE REHEARSED AT LENGTH VARIOUS GROUPS OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES GROC HAS TAKEN IN SINCE FALL OF VIETNAM (HE REFERRED TO THOUSANDS) INCLUDING THOSE

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FROM THAILAND AS WELL AS SOME DIRECTLY FROM VIETNAM VIA RED CROSS ARRANGEMENTS. HE REFERRED AS WELL TO REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED IN MARCH 1977 IN TWO BOATS NEAR RYUKYU ISLAND (TAIPEI 3188) NOTING HOW LONG IT HAS TAKEN FOR CHECK TO BE MADE IN U.S. AND DISCOURAGING PROSPECTS ABOUT THOSE REFUGEES BEING TAKEN INTO U.S. PROGRAM. WITH ALL OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND, SHEN CONCLUDED, GROC

FELT OBLIGED TO RESPOND NEGATIVELY TO THE REQUEST ON THE ISRAELI VESSEL. TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD ENCOURAGE BRINGING TO TAIWAN WHATEVER REFUGEES WERE FOUND AT SEA IN THE FUTURE AND LEAVING THEM HERE AS A GROC RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INDEFINITE FUTURE. HE ALSO REFERRED TO SECURITY PROBLEMS, ETC.

3. I POINTED OUT WE WERE ONLY ASKING THE ROC, AS COUNTRY OF FIRST ASYLUM, TO DO WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS HONG KONG AND PHILIPPINES, WERE ALSO DOING AND I MENTIONED THE COOPERATION OF THOSE COUNTRIES, CITING AS EXAMPLE PARA 1 HONG KONG 7020 WHICH I HAD JUST READ. I SAID THERE WAS INEVITABLY A BURDEN INVOLVED IF THESE REFUGEES WERE NOT TO PERISH AT SEA AND WE URGED GROC TO DO ITS SHARE, AS WE IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE ALSO BEEN DOING ON A VERY LARGE SCALE.

4. AFTER CONSIDERABLE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS, MINISTER SHEN SAID "GIVE ME SOME MORE TIME," MAKING CLEAR THAT HE WOULD REOPEN QUESTION IN GROC WITHOUT IMPLYING, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD CONFIDENCE HE COULD REVERSE PRESENT POSITION. HE ALSO SAID HE WOULD BE ABLE TO ARGUE THIS CASE MORE EFFECTIVELY IF WE COULD ASSURE HIM THAT U.S. PROCESSING WOULD TAKE PLACE MORE QUICKLY AND THAT THIS WOULD BE A ONE-TIME CASE RATHER THAN SETTING A PRECEDENT, AS HE FEARED IT WOULD. I SAID I WOULD URGE WASHINGTON TO DO WHAT IT COULD ON PROCESSING BUT DID NOT PROMISE HIM ANYTHING ON PRECEDENT PROBLEM.

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5. I WILL PROBABLY HEAR SOMETHING FURTHER FROM SHEN NEXT WEEK. MEANWHILE WE WILL PROCEED ON MONDAY WITH PROCESSING. UNGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770218-0445
Format: TEL
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770642/aaaabklt.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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